

Vital Sidarovich

<https://doi.org/10.26485/AAL/2024/70/6>

NEW FINDS OF ROMAN PROVINCIAL COINS IN BELARUS

ABSTRACT The article presents data on new finds of Roman provincial coins in Belarus, which were obtained in 2014-2024, and discusses all currently known finds, among which coins from the Balkan provinces, mainly from Thrace. In Belarus, four main areas of occurrence of Roman provincial coins have been indicated. It was found that these coins were the most characteristic for regions that were in the Kyiv culture zone during the Roman period, while in the Wielbark culture zone they are quite rare

Keywords: Roman provincial coins, coin finds, Wielbark culture, Kyiv culture

ABSTRAKT W artykule przedstawiono dane o nowych znaleziskach rzymskich monet prowincjonalnych na Białorusi, które pozyskano w latach 2014-2024, a także omówiono wszystkie obecnie znane znaleziska, wśród których dominują monety z prowincji bałkańskich, przede wszystkim z Tracji. Na terenie Białorusi wydzielono cztery główne obszary występowania rzymskich monet prowincjonalnych. Stwierdzono, że monety te były najbardziej charakterystyczne dla regionów, które w okresie wpływów rzymskich znajdowały się w strefie kultury kijowskiej, podczas gdy na obszarze kultury wielbarskiej są one dość rzadkie.

The territory of Belarus is the peripheral zone of distribution of the coins of the provinces of the Roman Empire. These coins are much less common here than in Ukraine. Nevertheless, information about their findings in Belarus is very important, as it helps to obtain data on the directions and nature of Roman-barbarian contacts. It should be noted that the localization of Belarusian finds of Roman provincial coins is often more accurate than Ukrainian ones. This is due to their scarcity (in comparison with the finds from Ukraine) and, accordingly, the possibility of a more thorough verification and clarification of the details of each find.

In 2014, I published a set of finds of Greek and Roman provincial coins in Belarus, which provided data on 39 coins of the provinces of the eastern part of the Roman Empire.¹ Since that time, I have recorded 26 more Roman provincial coins found on the territory of Belarus, which made it necessary to prepare an addendum to the collection of finds from 2014. It should be noted that some of the new finds have already been published. So, in 2017, in collaboration with Volha Liaŭko, I published an article about Roman coins, including the

Cappadocian didrachma, from settlements near the village of Kardon in the Vitebsk voblast.² About 4 coins of Bithynia from the territory of Belarus was reported in our article with Kyrylo Myzgin, published in 2020.³ These coins are also included in the list of new finds presented below.

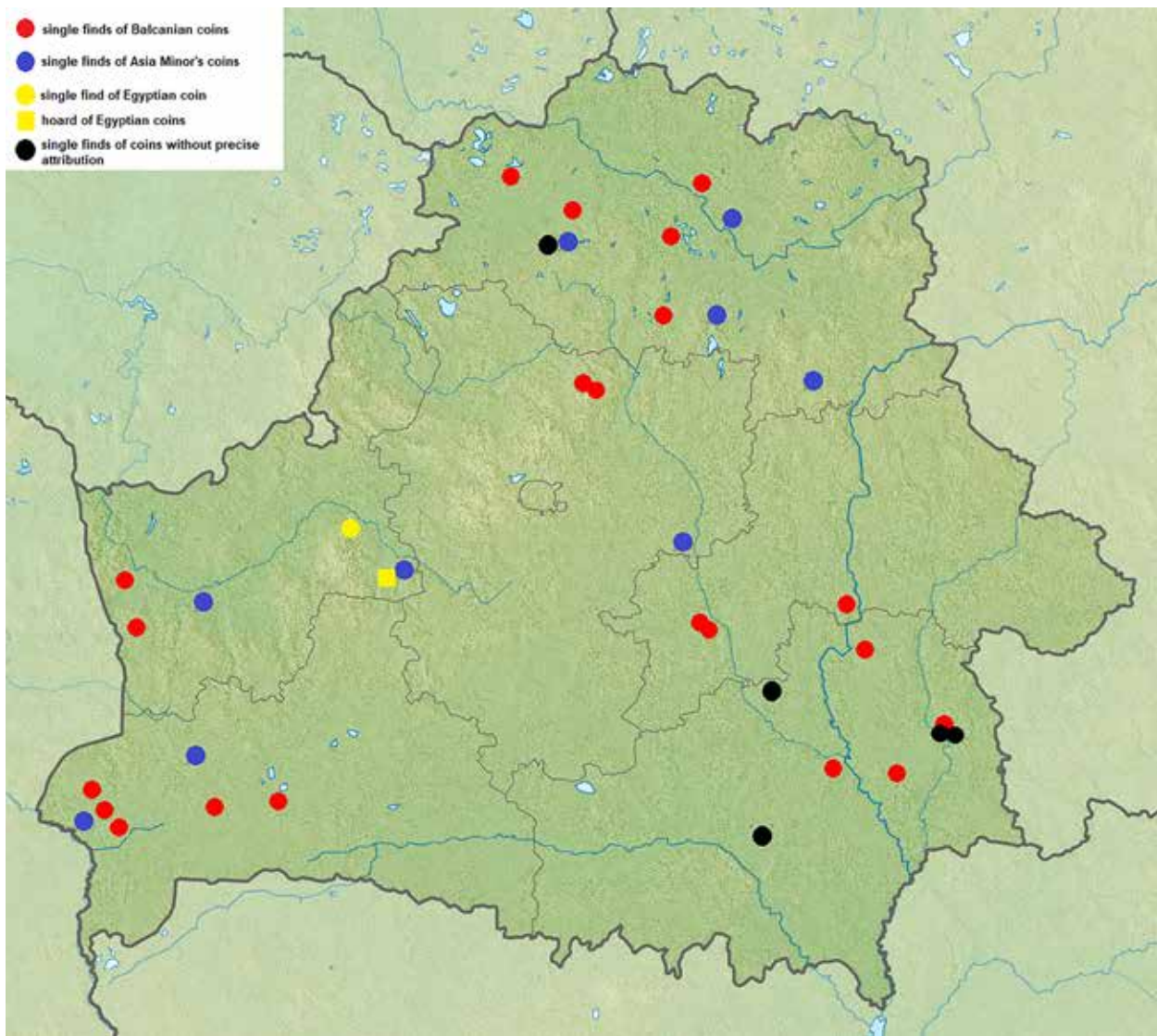
New finds of Roman provincial coins have been registered in all regions of Belarus. Only one of the coins (didrachm of Cappadocia) was found during archaeological excavations. Almost all other finds (with the exception of two coins from the collective find) are single and were made by treasure hunters, from whom I received information. Most of these coins ended up in private collections. Only four coins (three of which were from Bithynia) were donated to museum collections: one to the National Historical Museum of the Republic of Belarus and three to the Coin Cabinet of the Belarusian State University.

Most of the new finds are emissions from the Balkan provinces. These are seven Thracian coins, two Macedonian, five from Lower Moesia and two from Upper Moesia. Among the new finds of

¹ Sidarovich 2014: 75-82.

² Ляўко, Сідаровіч 2017: 45.

³ Myzgin, Sidarovich 2020.



Map 1. Distribution of Roman provincial coins in Belarus

provincial-Roman coins, a significant part (9 specimens) are emissions from Asia Minor. If the Lycian drachma had already been found once in the hoard of imperial denarii found in 1974 near the village of Lyščycy, then the coins of Bithynia, Cappadocia, Lydia and Troas were first registered on Belarusian territory after 2014. One of the recently found coins has very poor preservation, but it can be attributed to the coinage of the eastern provinces.

Macedonia

1. Severus Alexander (222-235). Pella. Varbanov 3735var?

Obv.: Laureate head right;
IMP ALEXANDER PIVS AVG.

Rev.: Tyche enthroned left, raising hem of veil;
COL IVL AVG PELLA.

Mahilioŭ voblasts.
Single find. Private collection.

2. Gordian III (238-244). Dium. RPC VII.2: unassigned; ID 22083

Obv.: laureate, draped bust, right;
IMP C M ANT GORDIANVS.

Rev.: Asclepius standing facing, head l., holding serpent staff; COL IVL DIENSIS, D D.

Brest voblasts, Drahičyn raion, Biezdziež.
Single find. Private collection. (Fig. 1.1)

Moesia Inferior (Lower)

1. Caracalla (198-217). Marcianopolis. Magistrate Quintillianus. Varbanov 962

Obv.: laureate head of Caracalla right;
ANTΩNINOC ΠIIOC AVTOVCTOC.

Rev.: eagle standing facing on globe, head right, holding wreath in beak;
YΠI KYNTIΛIANO-Y
MAPKIANOΠIOTAI / Ω-N.

Brest voblasts, Brest or Kamianiets raion, near Li-asnaja River.

Single find. Private collection.

2. Macrinus (217-218). Nikopolis ad Istrum. Varbanov 3330.

Obv.: Laureate head right;
[AYT K M O]ΠΕΛ ΣΕΥ-HP MAK[PINOΣ]

Rev.: Herakles standing facing, head right, resting on club, holding bow and lion skin;
ΥΠ [Κ ΑΓΡΙΠΠΑ ΝΙ-Κ]ΟΠΟΛΙΤΩΝ
ΠΡΟΣ / ΙΣΤΡΟΝ

Homel voblasts, Rahačou raion.

Single find. Private collection. (Fig. 1.2)

3. Elagabalus (218-222). Marcianopolis. Varbanov 1579. 26 mm.

Obv.: laureate, draped bust, right;
AYT K M AYΦHΛIOΣ ANTΩNEINOΣ

Rev.: Nemesis standing left, drawing out fold of drapery at shoulder, holding baton, wheel at foot left; ΥΠ IOYΛ ANT CEΛEYKOY
MAPKIANOΠO / ΛITΩN.

Vitsebsk voblasts, Liepiel raion, Liepiel (environs). Single find. Private collection. (Fig. 1.3)

4. Gordian III (238-244). Marcianopolis. Magistrate Tullius Menophilus. Varbanov 1956.

Obv.: laureate, draped and cuirassed bust of Gordian to left, facing bust of Serapis to right; [ANTΩN]IOC ΓOPΔIANOC AVT
AVT KM

Rev.: helmeted figure of Athena standing left, holding spear and resting on shield; VII
M[HNOΦ]IΛOY MAPKIANOΠOΛITΩN,
E in field to left.

Vitsebsk voblasts, Braslaŭ raion, Tsiatsierki. Single find. Private collection.

5. Gordian III (238-244). Odessus. Varbanov 4463.

Obv.: laureate, draped, cuirassed bust of Gordian right facing draped bust of Serapis, wearing kalathos, cornucopiae over shoulder;
AVT K M A / ANTΩ[NIOC ΓO]PΔIANOC.

Rev.: Asklepios standing facing, head left, holding serpent-entwined staff and mantle over arm. E in right field; OΔHCCEITΩN.

Mahilioŭ voblasts, Babrujsk raion, Bajary. Collective find. Private collection. (Fig. 1.7)

Moesia Superior (Upper)

1. Trajan Decius or Trebonianus Gallus(?) (249-253?). Viminacium. RPC?

Obv.: laureate bust of emperor, right;
Legend is not visible.

Rev.: Moesia standing left; at left, bull standing right; at right, lion standing left;
P M S COL VIM, exe: ?

Brest voblasts, Kamianiets raion, Mikalaeva. Single find. Private collection.

2. Issuer? Æ. Viminacium. RPC? 25 mm, 9 g. Perforated.

Obv.: head of emperor or caesar, right;
Legend is not visible.

Rev.: Moesia standing left; at left, bull standing right; at right, lion standing left;
Legend is not visible.

Hrodna voblasts, Bierastaitsa raion, Kvatory. Single find. Private collection.

Thrace

1. Caracalla (197-217). Hadrianopolis. Varbanov 3642.

Obv.: Draped and cuirassed bust of laureate Caracalla right, holding spear and shield;
AYT M AYP [?] AN[TΩNEINOC].

Rev.: The emperor standing right, holding in right hand spear, and in left hand – parazonium; spurning kneeling captive;
ΑΔ-PIA / NO-ΠOΛ / CIT-ΩN.

Mahilioŭ voblasts, Kryčau raion.

Single find. Private collection. (Fig. 1.4)

2. Geta (209-211). Pautalia. Varbanov 4887?

Obv.: laureate head right;
AYT K Π CEΠ[TIM ΓETAC].

Rev.: Homonoia seated left, kalathos on head, holding patera and cornucopiae;
O[YΛΠIIA]C ΠAVTAAI / AC.

Vitsebsk voblasts, Ušačy raion, Slavieni. Near Čar-seviady Lake.

Single find. Private collection.

3. Diadumenian (218). Deultum. Moushmov 3573.

Obv.: Bare-headed, draped and cuirassed bust right; [M OPEL A]NTONINVS DIADVC

Rev.: Emperor on horseback galloping right, hurling spear with right hand cape extended behind; C[OL] FL [PAC] DEVLV.

Mahilioŭ voblasts, Babrujsk raion, Bajary.
Collective find. Private collection. (Fig. 1.5)

4. Gordian III (238-244). Deultum.
Draganov 917?
Obv.: radiate, draped and cuirassed bust, right;
IMP [GORDIANVS] PI[VS FEL] AV[G].
Rev.: Demeter standing left, holding patera and
long torch; COL FL PAC DEVLT.

Hrodna voblasts, Hrodna raion, Luckaŭliany.
Single find. Private collection. (Fig. 1.6)

5. Philip I and Otacilia Severa. 244-249.
Mesembria. Moushmov 4011?
Obv.: Laureate, draped bust of Philip, seen from
behind, vis-à-vis draped bust of Otacilia left;
[.....IΛIΠΠI..... /].
Rev.: Apollo standing left, holding plectrum and
lyre resting on column
MEC[AM]BPIAN[ΩN].

Minsk voblasts, Lahojsk raion, Plieščanicy (environs).
Single find. Private collection.

6. Philip II, caesar 244-247 AD. Mesembria.
Varbanov 4299.

Obv.: bare-headed, draped bust of Philip II right,
facing draped bust of Serapis left,
modius on head;
MAP IOYΛIIOC ΦIΛIΠΠIIOC / KAICAP.
Rev.: Zeus standing front, looking left, holding
patera and sceptre, eagle at foot left;
MECAMBP-IANΩN.

Vitsebsk voblasts, Polack raion, Bajary.
Single find. Private collection. (Fig. 1.8)

7. Philip II, caesar 244-247 AD. Mesembria.
Varbanov 4291.

Obv.: bare head of Philip right, facing draped
bust of Serapis left, in modius;
MAP IOVLIOC FILI[PPOC] / KAICA / P.
Rev.: [MECA]MB-PIANWN, Hygeia standing
right, feeding serpent.

Minsk voblasts, Lahojsk raion, Plieščanicy (envi-
rons).
Single find. Private collection.



Fig. 1. Coins of the Balkan provinces of the Roman Empire from the territory of Belarus:
1 – Biezdzież; 2 – Rahačoŭ raion; 3 – Liepiel; 4 – Kryčaŭ raion;
5, 7 – Babrujsk raion, Bajary; 6 – Luckaŭliany; 8 – Polack raion, Bajary

Bithynia – 5

1. Hadrian (117-138). Koinon.
10,36 g; 26 mm. RPC III 996.
Obv.: radiate head, right;
[AYT KAIC TPAI] AΔPIANOC [CEB].
Rev.: Octastyle temple;
[BC]IΘYNIAC; [K]OI-NON.
Minsk voblasts, Bierazino raion, Rehispolle.⁴
Single find. Coin Cabinet of Belarusian State University. (Fig. 2.1)
2. Julia Domna (193-217). Nicaea.
12,53 g; 28 mm. RG 388
Obv.: draped bust, right; IOYAIΑ-AYΓ[OYCT]A;
Rev.: Emperor in military clothes, with a spear,
riding a horse, right; [N]IKAIC-Ω-N
Vitsebsk voblasts, Čašniki raion, Kopcevičy.⁵
Single find. Coin Cabinet of Belarusian State University. (Fig. 2.2)
3. Macrinus (217-218). Nicaea.
9,85 g; 26 mm. RG 551
Obv.: laureate head, right;
[AYT] K M OΠEΛ CEOV HP
MAKPEIN[OC AYΓ];
on the back of the head there is
a countermark: turned by 180 degrees
in relation to the axis of the obverse of

- the coin, portrait of a bare-head
with a beard, left, in an oval.
- Rev.: Dikaiosyne standing left, holding scales
and cornucopiae; [NI]KAIC[ΩN].
Vitsebsk voblasts, Hlybokaje raion, Juzafova.⁶
Single find. Private collection. (Fig. 2.3)
4. Severus Alexander (222-235). Nicaea.
8,66 g; 29 mm. RPC VI, 3212 (temporary)
Obv.: laureate, draped and cuirassed bust right;
M AVP CEVH AΛEΞANΔROC [...].
Rev.: Athena standing facing, looking l.,
holding patera and spear; at her feet, shield;
NIKAIEΩN
Homel voblasts.
Single find. The National Historical Museum of the
Republic of Belarus. (Fig. 2.4)
 5. Gordian III (238-244). Nicaea.
AE 19; 2,97 g; 19 mm. RG 712;
RPC VI.2 (unassigned; ID 19866)
Obv.: radiate, draped and cuirassed bust, right;
[M ANT ΓOP]ΔIANOC AV
Rev.: four standards; the central pair topped by
eagles, the outer two topped by wreaths;
[NIKAIEΩN].
Brest voblasts, Pružany (environs).⁷
Single find. Private collection. (Fig. 2.5)



Fig. 2. Coins of the provinces of Asia Minor from the territory of Belarus:
1 – Rehispolle; 2 – Kopcevičy; 3 – Juzafova; 4 – Homel voblasts; 5 – Pružany

⁴ Myzgin, Sidarovich 2020: 188-189.
⁵ Myzgin, Sidarovich 2020: 189-190.

⁶ Myzgin, Sidarovich 2020: 190-192.
⁷ Myzgin, Sidarovich 2020: 192.

Cappadocia – 1

1. Vespasian and Titus (as Caesar).
Caesarea-Eusebia, 69-79. Didrachm.
4,76 g. RPC II, 1650(?).

Obv.: laureate head of Vespasian, right.

Rev.: laureate head of Titus, right.

Vitsebsk voblasts, Šumilina raion, Kardon, settlement.⁸

Excavations of V. Liaŭko, 2016. Institute of History of the National Academy of sciences of Belarus.

Lycia – 1

1. Trajan (98-117). Lycia, AR drachm.
AD 98-99. BMC 9-11.

Obv.: Laureate head of Trajan right,
AYT KAIC NEP TPAIANOC CEB ΓEPM;

Rev.: Two citharas, with dot in between;
small owl at top; ΔΗΜΕΞ ΥΠΙΑΤ Β

Hrodna voblasts, Masty raion, between Hornyja and Dolnyja Samujlavičy

Single find. Private collection.

Lydia

1. Antoninus Pius (138-161). Tralles.
Magistrate Publius. 31,8 mm, 14.17 g.
RPC IV.2, 1596 (temporary).

Obv.: laureate head of Antoninus Pius, right;
[TITOC AIAIOK K]AIC ANT[ΩNEINOC].
Countermark: GIC 324 (eagle standing r.,
head l., wings half open)

Rev.: to left, Kore standing, right, holding long sceptre;
to right, Demeter standing, left, holding ears
of corn and poppy over lighted altar and long
scepter; ΕΠΙ ΠΟΠΛΙΟΥ ΓΡΑΜ ΤΡΑΛΙ.

Vitsebsk voblasts, Talačyn raion, Vialikija Mikhiničy.

Single find. Coin Cabinet of the Belarusian State University.



Fig. 3. Coin of Antoninus Pius, minted in Tralles (Lydia). Found near Vialikija Mikhiničy

Troas

1. Severus Alexander (222-235). Alexandria. Type?

Obv.: laureate, draped and cuirassed(?) bust of
Severus Alexander, right; ...S ALE...

Rev.: horse advancing, right, grazing;
COL AVG TRO ●

West of Brest voblasts.

Single find. Private collection.

Eastern provinces

1. Gordian III? (238-244?). Mint?

Obv.: busts of Gordian and Tranquillina?

Rev.: ?

Homel voblasts, Kalinkavičy raion.

Single find. Private collection.

Thus, at the moment it is known that 65 coins have been found in Belarus, which come from 42 sites. The most common coins of the Balkan provinces (27 specimens), and primarily of the Thracian cities – 12 specimens (Table 1). In small quantities are known coins of Macedonia (3 specimens), Lower Moesia (8), and Upper Moesia (4). All emissions of the Balkan provinces are bronze denominations of the end of the 2nd - the middle of the 3rd century.

There are only eleven finds of coins of Asia Minor in Belarus. Unlike the Balkan ones, among the Asia Minor coins from the territory of Belarus there are three silver specimens – the Cappadocian didrachm and the Lycian drachms. Undoubtedly, their entry into the territory of Belarus should be considered separately from other provincial coins, since they were actively circulated in the Empire in parallel with denarii in the 1st and 2nd centuries.⁹ In Ukraine, a large number of finds of Asia Minor coins have been recorded. In the right bank these are, as a rule, emissions from cities of western and north-western Asia Minor, and on the left bank of the Dnieper there is a significant concentration of Trebizond coins, which is associated with the participation of the barbarians, who lived in this region, in plunder of cities of Asia Minor.¹⁰ On the territory of Belarus, no regularities in the distribution of Asia Minor coins have yet been observed. The chronology of production of coins of Asia Minor is wider – from silver coins of late 1st century to bronze denominations of the 2nd - mid of 3rd century AD.

⁹ Kunisz 1979; Bodzek 2004: 147-148; Zajac 2016: 64-68.

¹⁰ Бейдин 2012: 151-153; Мызгин 2011: 323; Мызгин 2016: 162-167.

⁸ Ляўко, Сідаровіч 2017: 45.

Five more coins found in Belarus can be attributed to the products of the mints of the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire. All of them have very poor preservation, which does not allow to make their attribution, but with full certainty I can say that these are coins of the Balkan or Asian Minor provinces.

Emissions of Egyptian Alexandria account for more than a third (22 specimens out of 64) of Roman provincial coins found in Belarus, but they come from only 2 locations, which does not allow us to speak of their widespread occurrence in this part of the Barbaricum. In addition, it should be taken into account that these coins were minted later than the rest of the coins of the Roman provinces found in Belarus, and their receipt here should be considered separately.

If we talk about the geographical distribution of finds (Map 1), then we can conditionally distinguish four main zones of distribution of Roman provincial coins on the territory of Belarus:

- southeastern, including the Homel and, in part, the Mahilioŭ Dnieper region, as well as the lower and middle course of the Dnieper Biarezina;
- northern, covering the left tributaries of the Dvina in its middle reaches, as well as the upper reaches of the Dnieper Biarezina;
- southwestern, covering the west of the Brest voblasts (the basin of the Western Bug River, as well as the adjacent part of the Prypiat River basin);
- northwestern, including Hrodna Neman region.

The southeastern zone contains the largest number of locations of Roman provincial coins – 14. Among 17 coins from these locations, the Balkan coins are absolutely dominant – there are 11 of them. Two coins belong to the issues of Bithynia, and the exact attribution of four more coins turned out to be impossible due to their severe corrosion damage.

In Roman times, this region was occupied by the population of the Kyiv archaeological culture, which, thanks to intensive contacts with the Cherniakhiv culture, was well acquainted with such a category of Roman imports as coins. A significant number of coins of the Roman provinces, primarily the Balkan and Danube ones, in the area of the Cherniakhiv culture have been repeatedly noted by a number of researchers.¹¹

¹¹ Бейдин 2012: 151; Мызгин 2016: 163; Myzgin 2018; Мызгин 2019: 10-11.

If the finds of antique coins in the Homel Dnieper region and the southern part of the Mahilioŭ Dnieper region reliably relate to the Kyiv culture, the more northern locations still raise many questions. This also applies to the northern zone of finds of Roman provincial coins that I conditionally identified (13 coins in total (8 Balkan and 4 Asia Minor coins, as well as one not fully attributed) from 13 locations), that is, the territory inhabited in the first centuries of the new era by the Eastern Balts. Left bank of the middle course of the Dvina in the 1st-2nd centuries. AD was occupied by the population of the Dnieper-Dvina culture, and the upper course of the Dnieper Biarezina was occupied by the tribes of the hatched pottery culture. It is likely that the inhabitants of these cultures continued to live in the region under consideration at a later time, but their calm was disturbed by the expansion of their southern neighbors. If the upper reaches of the Dnieper Biarezina have long been considered a likely territory for the settlement of the tribes of the Kyiv culture, then the Dvina region until a certain time was not attributed to the area of this culture. However, the studies of a number of archaeologists, including Belarusian ones,¹² made it possible to assert that this area can be expanded to a significant part of the Dvina basin.¹³ In the middle-second half of the 3rd century, the population of the Upper Dnieper group of Kyiv culture moved to the north (monuments of Abidnia type), and at the beginning of the 4th century, another wave of Kyiv culture penetrates the Dvina region from the Desna region. As a result of these processes, a group of sites of the Zaozer'e-Uzmien type appears, which exists here until the 5th century.¹⁴ The boundaries of the distribution of these sites have not yet been precisely delineated, but in the opinion of N. Lopatin and A. Furas'ev in the west they reach the headwaters of Viliya (tributary of the Neman).¹⁵ Thus, the western part of the area of the Zaozer'e-Uzmien 'type sites largely coincides with the northern zone of distribution of Roman provincial coins. Considering that almost all the coins found in this region (excluding the Cappadocian didrachm) date back to the first half of the 3rd century, their penetration into this region can be associated with the first wave of the expansion of Kyiv culture, that is, with the proliferation of sites of the Abidnia type.

¹² Левко 2016: 277-280; Шадыра 2016: 250; Кенько 2016.

¹³ Лопатин, Фурас'ев 2007: рис. 1.

¹⁴ Лопатин, Фурас'ев 2007: 70-72, 90-91.

¹⁵ Лопатин, Фурас'ев 2007: 6, рис. 1.

Table 1. Coins of the Balkan and Asia Minor provinces from the territory of Belarus. Distribution by issuer

	Balkan provinces				Provinces of Asia Minor						Eastern provinces	Total
	Moesia Superior	Moesia Inferior	Macedonia	Thrace	Bithynia	Cappadocia	Lycia	Mysia	Lydia	Troas		
Vespasian and Titus						1						1
Trajan							2					2
Hadrian					1							1
Antoninus Pius									1			1
Septimius Severus											1	1
Caracalla, Geta and Julia Domna		1		3	1							5
Macrinus and Diadumenian		1		1	1							3
Elagabalus		1										1
Alexander Severus		1	1		1					1		4
Gordian III	1	3	1	5	1							11
Gordian III?											1	1
Gordian III or Philip II											1	1
Philip I and Philip II		1	1	3								5
Trajan Decius or Trebonianus Gallus(?)	1											1
Aemilian	1											1
Valerian I or Gallienus								1				1
Issuer?	1										2	3
Total	4	8	3	12	5	1	2	1	1	1	5	43

In the southwestern zone, only 9 coins are known – 6 Balkan (Deultum (2), Viminacium (2), Marcianopolis and Dion) and 3 Asia Minor (Nicaea, Alexandria Troas and Lycia). Trajan's Lycian drachm comes from a hoard of Roman imperial denarii¹⁶ and chronologically separated from the rest of the coins, which were minted from bronze in the second third of the 3rd century. The southwestern zone of distribution of Roman provincial coins can reliably be associated with the Wielbark culture. The population of this culture was familiar with the coin production of the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire, but preferred, first of all, the silver of the central coinage.¹⁷

In the northwestern zone, 6 localities have been registered, including 5 single and 1 hoard. A feature of this region is the minimal (only 2 specimens) presence of Balkan coins. Only two specimens represent the emissions of Asia Minor, and one of the coins is a silver Lycian drachma, which circulated along with imperial denarii. Therefore, at this stage of research, we should talk about the randomness of the arrival of the Balkan and Asia Minor coins in the Hrodna Neman area. At the same time, only in this region were the finds of tetradrachms of Alexandria of Egypt recorded – one single find and a hoard of 21 coins,¹⁸ the arrival of which on the left bank of the

¹⁶ Sidorovich 2014: 77-78.

¹⁷ See, for example: Romanowski 2007: 32, 39.

¹⁸ Sidorovich 2013. I have received information that at least 7 more Alexandrian coins were recently

upper reaches of the Neman River, I associate with the service of the barbarians in the auxiliary units of the Roman army in Egypt.¹⁹

The Neman basin is traditionally considered a territory that was inhabited by Baltic tribes in Roman times. The population of the upper and middle reaches of the Neman in the first half of the 1st millennium belongs to the eastern or western group of Baltic tribes.²⁰ However, the nature of coin finds in Hrodna Neman area, among which imperial denarii predominate, may indicate the penetration of the East German population here. The presence of the Gothic population in this region is also evidenced by the numerous single finds of artifacts characteristic of the Gothic rather than any of the Baltic cultures: some types of fibulae (for example, Gródek-47),²¹ ax-shaped pendants, etc.²² Probably, the penetration of Roman provincial coins into the Belarusian Neman area can be connected with the Wielbark culture. At the same time, it cannot be ruled out that these coins (or part of them) belonged to representatives of the autochthonous Baltic population, who received them as a result of trade contacts.

Thus, on the territory of Belarus, several zones of finds of Roman provincial coins can be distinguished, among which it is especially worth noting the regions associated with the spread of sites of Kyiv culture – the southern part of the Belarusian Dnieper region and part of the Middle Dvina region (mainly its left-bank part) with the adjoining upper reaches of the Dnieper Biarezina. These coins are less characteristic of Bug region and Neman region, which are characterized by the absolute dominance of silver denarii and which we can, to one degree or another, associate with the Wielbark culture.

At the same time, one should pay attention to gaps on the map of the distribution of coins. First of all, this is the Prypiat basin (Belarusian Palessie), where a Macedonian coin has been found only in the far west (near the village Biezdzież). If in the east of this region, ancient coins are extremely rare, then in its western part, and especially in the Pinsk-Stolin Palessie and in the Yaselda river

basin, finds of Roman coins are relatively often recorded, which can be associated with the penetration of the population of the Wielbark culture.²³ In my opinion, the absence of finds of Roman provincial coins in the Prypiat Palessie is due to a number of factors, among which the most important one seems to me to be the strong swampiness of this region, which made it unattractive for the population of the Kyiv culture. At the same time, the Wielbark culture population, traces of which are recorded on the upper tributaries of the Prypiat, preferred denarii, as noted above. Of course, one should take into account the weak archaeological research of the sites of the Roman period in the Prypiat Palessie (especially in its eastern part).

The receipt of the absolute majority of Roman provincial coins on the territory of Belarus is associated, in my opinion, with the interaction with the Cherniakhiv culture. Most likely these were economic contacts. Among the northern neighbors of the Cherniakhiv culture (primarily among the tribes of the Kyiv culture), Roman bronze coins was popular, and was probably used as a raw material for the production of jewelry. This hypothesis can be confirmed (or refuted) by further joint research by Belarusian, Russian and Ukrainian scientists aimed at studying the topography of finds of Roman bronze coins and jewelry with champlévé enamels (one of the main indicators of Kyiv culture), as well as determining their elemental composition.

Bibliography

- Бейдин Г.В. 2012. *Римские провинциальные монеты на территории Украины в ареале черняховской культуры*, Древности. Харьковский историко-археологический ежегодник, 11, 147-159.
- Белявец В.Г. 2018. *Новыя знаходкі фібул тыпу Грудэк-47: да пытання аб фінале помнікаў вельбарскай культуры на тэрыторыі Беларусі*. In *Этнокультурные процессы на территории Беларуси в I - начале II тысячелетия нашей эры: материалы международной научной конференции, посвященной 90-летию профессора Э. М. Загорюльского*, Минск, 6-7 декабря 2018 г. Минск, 48-59.
- Белявец В.Г. 2016. *Насельніцтва вельбарскай культуры ў гісторыка-культурным развіцці зямель Беларусі рубяжа II/III - пачатку*

discovered at the site of the Turec hoard, but at the moment this information needs to be verified and clarified.

¹⁹ Sidorovich 2013: 180.

²⁰ Медведев 2011:10-11, 27.

²¹ Белявец 2018: 48-59.

²² Unfortunately, the vast majority of these items come from illegal excavations, and only a small part of them entered museum collections, which prevents their introduction into scientific circulation.

²³ Белявец 2016: 391-392.

- V st. n.э.* In *Славяне на территории Беларуси в догосударственный период: к 90-летию со дня рождения Леонида Давыдовича Поболя*. В 2 кн.; науч. ред.: О.Н. Левко, В.Г. Белявец; Кн. 1, Минск, 384-450.
- Bodzek J. 2004. *Drachma Cezarei Kapadockiej ze skarbu denarów Nietulisko Małe I*. In *Studia z dziejów antyku. Pamięci Andrzeja Kunisza*, red. W. Kaczanowicz, Katowice, 142-152.
- Кенько П.М. 2016. *Материалы верхнеднепровского варианта киевской культуры с селища Черная Лоза*. In *Славяне на территории Беларуси в догосударственный период: к 90-летию со дня рождения Леонида Давыдовича Поболя*. В 2 кн.; науч. ред.: О.Н. Левко, В.Г. Белявец; Кн. 2, Минск, 255-262.
- Kunisz A. 1979. *Drachmy licyjskie i pontyjskie w obiegu monetarnym na europejskich obszarach Cesarstwa Rzymskiego*, *Historia i Współczesność*, 5, 65-93.
- Левко О.Н. 2016. *Культурные трансформации в I тысячелетии н.э. на территории Витебского Подвинья и восточной части Днепро-Двинского междуречья*. In *Славяне на территории Беларуси в догосударственный период: к 90-летию со дня рождения Леонида Давыдовича Поболя*. В 2 кн.; науч. ред.: О.Н. Левко, В.Г. Белявец; Кн. 2, Минск, 271-320.
- Ляўко В.М., Сідаровіч В.М. 2017. *Рымскія манеты з гарадзішча і селішча каля в. Кардон у Беларускаім Падзвінні*, *Весці Нацыянальнай акадэміі навук Беларусі. Сэрыя гуманітарных навук*, 4, 43-49.
- Лопатин Н.В., Фурасьев А.Г. 2007. *Северные рубежи раннеславянского мира в III-V вв. н.э.*, *Раннеславянский мир*, 8.
- Медведев А.М. 2011. *Верхнее Понеманье в железном веке и раннем средневековье*, Минск.
- Мызгин К.В. 2011. *Находки римских монет провинциальной малоазийской чеканки II-III вв. на территории черняховской культуры*, *Древнее Причерноморье*, IX, 321-328.
- Мызгин К.В. 2016. *Готские войны, римские монеты и черняховская культура*, *Stratum plus*, 4, 153-171.
- Myzgin K. 2018. *Finds of Roman provincial coins on the territory of Eastern Europe: Balkan cities mintage*. In V. Ivanišević, B. Borić-Brešković, M. Vojvoda eds. *Proceedings of the International Numismatic Symposium "Circulation of the antique coins in Southeastern Europe"*, Belgrade, 87-103.
- Мызгин К.В. 2019. *Античные монеты как источник по культурной и ранней истории днепро-донецкой лесостепи I-V в.в.* In Любичев М.В. *Ранняя история днепродонецкой лесостепи I-V веков (Ostrogothica Serie: Bände, 2)*, часть 2, Харьков, 8-15.
- Myzgin K., Sidarovich V. 2020. *Znaleziska prowincjonalnych monet miast Bitynii na terenie Białorusi*, *Wiadomości Numizmatyczne*, 208, 187-212.
- Romanowski A. 2007. *Znaleziska monet rzymskich z terenów kultury wielbarskiej na Podlasiu, prawobrzeżnym Mazowszu i zachodniej Białorusi*, *Wiadomości Numizmatyczne*, LI, 1 (183), 29-51.
- Sidarovich V. 2013. *A hoard of Alexandrian Tetradrachms from the Last Quarter of the 3rd Century AD Found in the Upper Neman Region*, *Notae Numismaticae-Zapiski Numizmatyczne*, VIII, 173-184.
- Sidorovich V. 2014. *The Finds of Greek and Roman Provincial Coins in Belarus*, *Notae Numismaticae-Zapiski Numizmatyczne*, IX, 71-94.
- Шадыра В.І. 2016. *Матэрыяльная культура археалагічнага комплексу на возеры Сялява ў Дняпроўска-Дзвінскім міжрэччы: I-VIII стст. н.э.* In *Славяне на территории Беларуси в догосударственный период: к 90-летию со дня рождения Леонида Давыдовича Поболя*. В 2 кн.; науч. ред.: О.Н. Левко, В.Г. Белявец; Кн. 2, Минск, 197-255.
- Zajac B. 2016. *Znaleziska wschodnich drachm imperialnych na terenach europejskiego Cesarstwa Rzymskiego*. In P. Koczwarą, A. Jurkiewicz, S. Jellonek, B. Zajac (red.), *Pecunia Omnes Vincit. Moneta miejscowa i obca w starożytności i średniowieczu. Materiały pokonferencyjne z I Ogólnopolskiej Studencko-Doktoranckiej Konferencji Numizmatycznej*. Kraków, 23-24 maja 2014, Kraków, 63-73.

Vital Sidarovich

ORCID 0000-0003-3994-1732

Wydział Archeologii Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego

wital.sidarowicz@gmail.com